

# **Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project**

## **2007 Interagency Field Team (IFT) Annual Work Plan**

The purpose of this Annual Work Plan is to describe and prioritize activities that the Interagency Field Team (IFT) plans to conduct during 2007 by incorporating the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), San Carlos Apache Tribe (SCAT), White Mountain Apache Tribe (WMAT), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) 2007 annual work plans into one overarching work plan. The USFWS plan covers field work on the San Carlos Apache Reservation (SCAR) for USFWS and U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (USDA-WS) as well as USFWS administration duties. In addition, the SCAT plan identifies additional needs for either their personnel or USFWS personnel commensurate SCAT identified workloads. The USFWS and USDA-WS involvement with field work in New Mexico, non-tribal Arizona lands, and White Mountain Apache Tribal lands are covered within the appropriate document. Detailed descriptions of each activity can be found in the appropriate management plan.

Activities may have to be modified, postponed, added, or canceled due to changing circumstances, such as critical incidents (e.g. depredations or wolf/human conflicts) or other unplanned situations. Priorities may also change seasonally. However, with proper planning, adaptive management, and cooperative efforts, project activities should generally occur as outlined in this document. In addition, contingency planning time has been incorporated into all project activities, to accommodate for unsuspected deviations from the scheduled work plan.

A year-end evaluation will be conducted by the IFT, to analyze the activities and goals that were accomplished, to determine the reasons for significant deviations, and to summarize the amount of personnel required. This information will be used in developing the annual work plan for 2008.

Note: 1 Full time equivalent = FTE = 2,000 hrs/year (0.1 FTE = 200 hrs)

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**Summary of Planned Activities:**

Activity	Related SOP	Priority	Goal	Personnel Required FTE*	
1. General wolf monitoring	12.0 17.0 18.0	1	Monitor wolf movements via aerial/ground telemetry and tracking to determine survival, dispersal, territories, population size, reproduction and recruitment	AGFD NMDGF WMAT SCAT <b>Total</b>	1.5 1.0 1.5 1.0 <b>5.0 FTE</b>
2. Fall Monitoring During Hunting Season	3.0 12.0 17.0 18.0	1	Intensively monitor wolves during hunting seasons and conduct outreach with hunters and campers.	AGFD NMDGF WMAT SCAT <b>Total</b>	0.2 0.1 0.74 0.5 <b>1.54 FTE</b>
3. Intensive Winter Monitoring	17.0 18.0 19.0	2	Establish prey characteristics and daily movements of 3-4 wolf packs during winter through daily flights	AGFD NMDGF WMAT <b>Total</b>	0.25 0.1 0.75 <b>1.1 FTE</b>
4. Wolf Releases and Translocations	5.0 6.0	1	1-2 initial releases possible for 2007. Translocations may occur in response to depredations, nuisance behavior, or boundary issues.	AGFD NMDGF WMAT USFS <b>Total</b>	0.2 0.1 0.1 0.05 <b>0.45 FTE</b>
5. Radio-collar free-ranging wolves	14.0 15.0 20.0 21.0 22.0 23.0	1	Maintain a minimum of 1/3 of all known wolves with radio collars, as equally distributed among all of the packs as possible, with an emphasis on placing radio collars on uncollared packs.	AGFD NMDGF WMAT <b>Total</b>	1.02 1.0 1.5 <b>3.52 FTE</b>
6. Year-End Helicopter Count and Capture	15	1	Use a helicopter to count and capture wolves	AGFD NMDGF	0.04 0.04

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Activity	Related SOP	Priority	Goal	Personnel Required FTE*
Operation				USDA-WS 0.01 <b>Total 0.09 FTE</b>
7. Respond to depredation reports	11.0 13.0	1	Investigate depredation reports within 24 hrs of being reported and begin management actions immediately, if needed.	AGFD 1.15 NMDGF 1.0 WMAT 2.0 (This estimate combines WMAT category of removal and translocation of wolves) USFWS 0.2 (SCAR) SCAT 0.5 <b>Total 4.85 FTE</b> Note: 3.2 of this time estimated to be required by USDA-WS
8. Respond to wolf sightings	10.0 13.0	2	Investigate all reports of wolves through phone interviews and/or field visits.	AGFD 0.1 NMDGF 0.3 WMAT 0.1 USDA-WS 0.05 USFWS 0.1 (SCAR) SCAT 0.5 <b>Total 1.15 FTE</b>
9. Response and removal of nuisance wolves (includes removal for boundary issues)	13.0	1	Promptly investigate and manage nuisance wolves in Arizona; assist with operations on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation and in New Mexico (depending on availability).	AGFD 1.25 NMDGF 0.75 WMAT Incorporated in number 7 above USDA-WS 0.23 USFWS 0.3 (SCAR) SCAT 0.5 <b>Total 3.03 FTE</b>
10. Administration / Program Management		2	Conduct daily administrative duties.	AGFD 0.8 NMDGF 0.4

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Activity	Related SOP	Priority	Goal	Personnel Required FTE*
				USFWS 0.5 USDA-WS 0.25 USFS 0.17 SCAT 0.25 <b>Total 2.37 FTE</b>
11. Attend meetings requiring IFT representation		1	Representatives from each agency will attend regional, IFT, Adaptive Management Working Group (AMWG), and cooperator meetings.	AGFD 0.15 NMDGF 0.15 WMAT 0.15 USFWS 0.15 USDA-WS 0.15 USFS 0.1 SCAT 0.15 <b>Total 1.0 FTE</b>
12. Write annual report. Develop appropriate databases, analyze data, and write in a scientific format for review.		1	Complete 2006 annual report by March 15, 2007.	AGFD 0.15 NMDGF 0.09 WMAT 0.01 USFWS 0.02 USDA-WS 0.01 USFS 0.02 <b>Total 0.30 FTE</b>
13. Assist with the management of captive facilities	21.0 23.0	3	Provide assistance to the captive facilities during captures and annual check-ups.	AGFD 0.02 NMDGF 0.01 WMAT 0.02 USFWS 0.02 SCAT 0.01 <b>Total 0.07 FTE</b>
14. Continue development of SOPs	0.0 1.0	2	Assist with the reviewing and occasional development of SOPs.	AGFD 0.06 NMDGF 0.03

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Activity	Related SOP	Priority	Goal	Personnel Required FTE*	
	2.0			WMAT 0.02 USFWS 0.04 <b>Total 0.15 FTE</b>	
15. Evaluate additional release sites	5.0	2	Identify and analyze additional release sites needed in 2007 and 2008.	AGFD 0.06 NMDGF Not required for this year. WMAT Incorporated in Number 4 Above USFS 0.08 <b>Total 0.14 FTE</b>	
16. Staff training and development		2	Insure that staff is able to participate in training or development opportunities identified in their Professional Development Plan.	AGFD 0.05 NMDGF 0.1 WMAT 0.1 USFWS 0.1 USDA-WS 0.1 SCAT 0.2 <b>Total 0.45 FTE</b>	
17. Conduct program outreach	3.0 4.0	1	Provide accurate, unbiased, and timely outreach programs through implementation of the Mexican Wolf Outreach Plan and related SOPs (see Section on Outreach below for more detail).	AGFD 1.0 NMDGF 0.15 WMAT 0.1 USFWS 0.1 USFS 0.08 SCAT 0.03 <b>Total 1.43 FTE</b>	

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Activity	Related SOP	Priority	Goal	Personnel Required FTE*
			<b>Total</b>	AGFD 8.0 FTE NMDGF 5.32 FTE SCAT 3.64 FTE WMAT 7.09 FTE USDA-WS 0.8 FTE USFWS 1.53 FTE USFS 0.5 FTE <b>Total 26.88 FTE</b>

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**Project Personnel:**

Agency	Availability to Field Operations (FTE)	Need Identified Per Agency (FTE)	Shortfall
AGFD	5.50	5.50 <sup>1</sup>	0
NMDGF	2.25	2.62 <sup>1</sup>	0.37
SCAT	0	3.64 <sup>2</sup>	3.64
USDA-WS	1.25	4.00 <sup>1</sup>	2.75
USFWS	4.25	4.78 <sup>1</sup>	0.53
WMAT	4.00	5.84 <sup>1</sup>	1.84
USFS	0	0.50	0.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	17.25	26.88	9.63

<sup>1</sup> USFWS and USDA-WS time is incorporated into individual jurisdictional leads work plans above. For example, AGFD non tribal work plan identified the need for 8.0 FTEs, of these 5.5 were expected to be Arizona personnel while 2.5 FTEs were expected to be either USFWS or USDA-WS personnel. NMGFD work plan also identified an additional 2.7 personnel from USFWS or USDA-WS. Similarly, the WMAT tribe also identified a need of 1.25 FTEs from either USFWS or USDA-WS.

<sup>2</sup> SCAT identified their FTE need for a successful year-round program operated by the tribe. This program would be consistent with the current guidelines on SCAT which reads: "The Tribal Resolution and agreement with the Service calls for the immediate removal of all wolves from the SCAR. Wolves have large home ranges and are very mobile animals. It is difficult to take direct action (e.g., removal/hazing) until enough locations are documented to determine if the animal(s) have localized in an area so that trapping or hazing efforts can be initiated. When such documentation occurs, the IFT will initiate attempts to capture and remove individual wolves from the SCAR." These employees could operate under either the USFWS or SCAT and are additional to those currently operating on the SCAT under the USFWS plan.

**Description of Activities**

**1. General Wolf Monitoring**

The IFT will implement Mexican Wolf Aerial Telemetry SOP 18 and Ground Telemetry SOP 17, to monitor the wolf population. Aerial and ground monitoring will occur on a daily, weekly, or bi-weekly basis, depending on funding and special seasonal objectives. The overall goal of the IFT is to acquire two locations per week on all wolves, via aerial and/or ground telemetry. However, this is dependent upon accessibility into specific areas and availability of project personnel. Winter efforts will document kill sites (see Intensive Winter Monitoring), pack sizes, pup survival, pair bonding, breeding, and dispersal via snow tracking, howling surveys, and telemetry. Spring efforts will document denning and production. Summer efforts will document rendezvous sites and pup presence/absence via howling surveys, visual observations, and tracking. Fall efforts will document dispersal, survival and movements during hunting seasons. Flight locations will be used for home range analysis since they will not be biased for locations near roads, as locations obtained from the ground would be. Flight scheduling may be intensified during certain times of the year in order to locate dens, determine when pups are born, and to conduct search flights for missing wolves.

## **2. Fall Monitoring**

During the fall hunting seasons two project personnel will be assigned to make hunter and camper contacts and locate wolves on a daily basis. Wolves that are located in areas vulnerable to being shot (i.e. on carcasses near roads or localized in areas of high hunter density) will have project personnel stationed in the area to make additional contacts and to intensively monitor the wolves. In Arizona, carcasses which are visible from roads will be moved into forested areas after being investigated by an AGFD Wildlife Manager, especially when wolves are located in the immediate area. When available, Law Enforcement (LE) from the USFWS and AGFD will assist with monitoring. IFT personnel will coordinate wolf location information with LE.

## **3. Intensive Winter Monitoring**

During the winter when snow cover permits, the IFT plans to intensify wolf monitoring on three to four packs in an effort to determine the health and characteristics of available prey, pack sizes, and daily wolf movements. Aerial telemetry and monitoring will occur on a daily basis throughout the winter when weather permits in order to pinpoint kills and observe wolf numbers. Ground crews will examine kill sites to verify the species and determine the health and cause of death when evidence is present. This form of monitoring will require three IFT personnel, one person responsible for aerial telemetry and two people to provide ground support.

## **4. Wolf Releases, Translocations and Removals**

The IFT spends considerable time coordinating wolf releases with the US Forest Service and affected stakeholders. Potential sites are analyzed, public meetings are held and one-on-one discussions are held with District Rangers and permittees. All release proposals are described in a release proposal document for AMOC review and Director approval. Translocations and removal of wolves may potentially occur throughout the year. Translocations or removals will be a result of management issues, such as depredations, nuisance behavior, establishing home ranges outside of the Recovery Area, and IFT decisions to manipulate population dynamics. In addition, wolves that localize on the San Carlos Apache Reservation will be removed and translocated by the IFT. USFWS personnel will be responsible for management actions on the SCAR. Translocations and removals are extremely variable, making it impossible to predict the amount of personnel required to accomplish these management actions. Many of these actions require close coordination with local USFS Districts and may include the development of closure orders, signing the areas, and adjustments in grazing allotment annual operating instructions.

## **5. Radio Collar Free-Ranging Wolves**

The goal is to maintain a minimum of 1/3 of all known wolves with radio collars, with an emphasis placed on collaring alpha pairs within each of the wolf packs. Trapping efforts will follow the methodology outlined in SOP 14 and SOP 21. Trapping will begin as early as late April, dependent upon environmental conditions, and will cease in the fall when temperatures reach freezing conditions. AGFD, NMDGF and WMAT personnel will be responsible for conducting trapping operations in Arizona, New Mexico and White Mountain Apache Tribal Lands respectively; however, occasional assistance from



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USFWS staff and volunteers may be required. Trapping efforts during the summer will focus on capturing uncollared wolves (especially newly formed packs) and replacing old collars from newly formed packs. Fall trapping will focus on capturing pups that survived until fall, with an emphasis being placed on packs that weren't trapped during the summer and uncollared packs.

**6. Year-End Helicopter Count and Capture Operation**

During January 2007 the IFT plans on conducting a year-end helicopter count and capture operation to count wolves after December 31<sup>st</sup>. The purpose of the flight is to assist with the year-end count and to opportunistically capture and collar wolves that are observed in open habitat.

**7. Respond to Depredation Reports**

The IFT, primarily Wildlife Services (USDA WS) agents, will respond to depredation reports to investigate the cause of death within 24 hours (see SOP 11) of receiving the report. Other IFT members may assist through preservation of evidence and monitoring of wolves in the area via radio-telemetry, as well as trapping efforts to remove offending animals. If management actions are needed (see SOP 13), they will be initiated immediately. Quantifying the amount of time that the IFT will be involved with depredations is highly variable. Therefore USDA WS has stationed a full-time depredation specialist and appointed other agents to assist the wolf program, as a means of assuring that USDA WS is always available to respond to depredation reports.

**8. Respond to Wolf Sightings**

The IFT will investigate all reports of wolves through phone interviews and/or field visits. Wolf reports will be documented and scrutinized by members of the IFT for their validity. Credible reports will be promptly investigated by the IFT to acquire additional information about each wolf sighting. In general, the IFT will primarily be looking for multiple sightings of wolves within a localized area. This provides the IFT with an opportunity to trap uncollared wolves and document the formation of new packs and dispersal activity.

**9. Response and Removal of Nuisance Wolves**

The IFT will respond to nuisance wolf reports to investigate the report. Other IFT members may assist through preservation of evidence and monitoring of wolves in the area via radio-telemetry, as well as hazing, deployment of Radio Activated Guard (RAG) boxes, remote camera set-up, and trapping efforts to remove nuisance animals. If management actions are needed (see SOP 13) they will be initiated immediately. The IFT will investigate all reports of nuisance wolves in accordance with SOP 13. Management actions will follow approved guidelines and is coordinated through the AMOC. Removals will be a result of management issues, such as depredations, nuisance behavior, travel outside of the Recovery Area, and IFT decisions to manipulate population dynamics. Removals are extremely variable, making it impossible to predict the amount of personnel required to accomplish these management actions.

**10. Administration**

Managing and coordinating field operations for the wolf project requires an array of daily administrative duties to be performed throughout the year. Work of this nature will include developing the 2008 Annual Work Plan, work schedules, developing release and translocation recommendations, coordinating management activities among IFT members, control of budgets, maintaining and ordering equipment, scheduling flights, writing commission/tribal council briefings, maintaining the Mexican wolf database and other administrative tasks. The amount of personnel and time required to accomplish these duties tends to be highly variable throughout the year. There is a need for a USFS liaison to provide increased coordination between the project and day-to-day operations of Forest management, including keeping the District Rangers and permittees informed, adjusting annual operating instructions, and coordinating wolf releases with forest management.

**11. Attend Meetings Requiring IFT Representation**

Throughout the year there are meetings that require IFT representation. IFT personnel that attend these meetings will provide up-to-date information about current issues, agenda items, and status of field operations. These meetings provide IFT personnel with an opportunity to interact with the public and other agencies.

**12. Write Annual Report**

Each year an Annual Report is prepared and distributed, to both internal and external publics. This document provides an overview of the current wolf status, the outreach program, captive program and adaptive management. The Annual Report will be completed by March 15, 2007.

**13. Assist with the Management of Captive Facilities**

During certain times of the year, the captive wolf facilities require assistance from the IFT with captures and annual check-ups. This provides staff with an opportunity to become proficient with capturing, handling and processing techniques.

**14. Continue Development of SOPs**

Members of the IFT will regularly review and evaluate existing SOPs and occasionally develop new SOPs or recommend changes to existing SOPs and present these to AMOC.

**15. Evaluate Additional Release Sites**

The IFT will identify and analyze additional release sites needed in 2007 and 2008 in coordination with the USFS, AMOC and the public. Various characteristics of each site will be evaluated and a map will be produced showing buffered areas around the San Carlos and Fort Apache Indian Reservation boundaries as well as occupied dwellings and towns. The USFS will evaluate the new proposed release sites, which included as Biological Analysis and Evaluation, and potential consultation with the Ecological Services of the FWS.

**16. Staff training and development**

Personnel will participate in professional training and developmental as appropriate to their agency. This could include formal training, attendance at professional meetings,

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self-directed projects, involvement in professional or local organizations, or other self-selected activities.

**17. Conduct Outreach Programs**

The Mexican Wolf Project's outreach program is a year-round effort to facilitate accurate, unbiased, and effective communication about the reintroduction project to the interested public. The IFT will place emphasis on providing outreach efforts to local affected communities, with at least 75% of the programs occurring within 50 miles of the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area (BRWRA) Boundary. Various public information officers will work with the IFT to maximize the effectiveness and distribution of the Outreach Program. In accordance with the Mexican Wolf Outreach Plan, Mexican Wolf Outreach SOP 3.0, IFT members and cooperators will implement the following specific objectives:

<b>Outreach Activity</b>	<b>2007 Goal</b>	<b>2006 Accomplishments</b>
A. Monthly updates	Produce 12 updates, completed by the first week of the following month	Produced 12 monthly updates
B. Commission or Tribal Council Briefings	Produce updates to the AGFD and NMDGF Commission and WMAT and SCAT Tribal Councils.	Produced 3 briefings
C. Dialogue using personal contacts, telephone, or e-mail	52 weekly postings of locations on the AGFD Web site ( <a href="http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf">www.azgfd.gov/wolf</a> ).	On a weekly basis to provide wolf location information, 657 emails were sent to affected stakeholders in NM; 99 emails were sent to affected stakeholders in AZ; 184 flight location maps were sent to Wildlife Officers and Law Enforcement; 1,672 agency cooperators received the edited weekly journal; 258 emails were sent to WMAT; 96 emails were sent to SCAT; and 128 emails were sent to NMDGF
D. Presentations	AGFD will provide at least 20 and NMDGF will provide 5-10 presentations to stakeholders and interested people. Ten presentations will be to Ranger Districts; seven presentations will be offered to	42 Presentations were provided at various venues (details in Annual Report)

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<b>Outreach Activity</b>	<b>2007 Goal</b>	<b>2006 Accomplishments</b>
	County Commission Meetings	
E. Conferences	Five presentations will be made at professional conferences and/or workshops	Three presentations were provided
F. NEPA activities related to revision of 10(j) rule	Six scoping meetings will be conducted in New Mexico and in Arizona	N/A
G. Internet Web sites	Maintain AGFD Web site with current information by updating weekly and continue development of curriculum pages. Assist with the upkeep of the USFWS Web site.	Updated as necessary
H. Annual Reports	Complete the 2006 annual report by March 15, 2007	Completed on time
I. Mexican Wolf Adaptive Management Work Group Meetings	Conduct at least 4 meetings in communities within or adjacent to the BRWRA	Four meetings were conducted
J. Field Contacts	The IFT will make approximately 750 forest visitor contacts; disseminating information and answering questions.	IFT made more than 450 forest visitor contacts during 2006
K. Published Information	Provide wolf reintroduction information and identification tips in the fall hunt regulations; other publication, newspapers, and outreach articles	Updated the fall hunting regulations; xx media releases were produced
L. Media Coordination	Continue to implement a process to ensure consistency, accuracy, and coordination in providing public information by the primary cooperators, using the established public information release matrix.	Implemented as necessary
M. Closure notices	Provide sufficient signage and information at all closures	Signage and information posted for 1 initial release
N. Public Education Field Experience	Conduct at least 1 AGFD public education field experience designed for local communities.	2 completed (1 AGFD, 1 USFWS)

**A. Monthly Updates**

Every month, a narrative summary of project activities will be developed and distributed to audiences. The update will include information on wolf activities and general locations, communication and coordination, personnel, litigation, law enforcement news and outreach activities. A draft update is prepared by the IFT and then forwarded to

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cooperators for review. The update is distributed through the AGFD Listserve to people who have signed up to receive the update. Updates are sent via email or fax and are also posted on the AGFD and USFWS Mexican wolf Web sites as well as posted at various locations within the BRWRA. Links to AGFD and USFWS Web sites will be requested on other agency and organizational Web sites.

**B. Commission/Tribal Council briefings**

On a quarterly basis, the AGFD IFT will produce a Commission briefing containing significant highlights for the reporting period. On an annual basis, the NMDGF Field Team Leader will produce a Commission briefing containing significant highlights for the reporting period. Tribal Council briefings will be produced as requested by the Council.

**C. Dialogue using personal contacts, telephone or email**

Personal interactions will be used to communicate issues of higher priority in a timely manner than some other methods of outreach. The purpose of these contacts will usually be information exchange. For example, campers may be informed of wolves in the area of their campsite, while permittees may be asked for input on wolf release sites. In addition, a weekly journal, containing two bearings and no mileage for wolf locations, are to be posted on the AGFD web site ([www.azgfd.gov/wolf](http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf)).

**D. Presentations**

Lecture-type presentations, as well as booth-type informational tables, will be used to provide current information about the wolf project. Outreach programs will emphasize objectivity. When appropriate, viewpoints of a diverse variety of stakeholders should be presented to offer balanced perspectives. These presentations are provided to school groups, civic organizations, resorts, campgrounds and special workshops.

**E. Conferences**

Lectures will be provided at professional conferences and workshop, such as the Wildlife Society, Species Survival Plan (SSP) meetings, Defenders of Wildlife, etc.

**F. NEPA Scoping**

The IFT will assist with the NEPA activities related to revision of 10(j) rule including meeting coordination and information dissemination.

**G. Internet Web sites**

AGFD and USFWS maintain Web sites with relevant information about the Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project. The AGFD Web site, [www.azgfd.gov/wolf](http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf), provides access to the monthly IFT updates, annual reports, project reviews, standard operating procedures, AMWG meeting agendas and summary notes, and Mexican wolf natural history information. The USFWS site, <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf>, provides access to numerous wolf program-related documents, such as the Environmental Impact Statement, the Non-essential Experimental Population Rule, and the monthly updates. Media advisories, as well as other special news items, are also made available. AGFD will maintain a Listserve for interested parties that sign up to receive the Mexican wolf update and other wolf-related information electronically by visiting

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[www.azgfd.gov/signup](http://www.azgfd.gov/signup). The IFT will coordinate with Department Web designers and outreach personnel to upgrade and redesign portions of the site, including the education curriculum pages.

#### **H. Annual Reports**

The IFT will produce an annual report of the previous year's activities by March 1. This report will include a summary of wolf population dynamics, occupied range, prey use, outreach efforts, livestock depredation, interactions with humans, funding, personnel as well as other pertinent information.

#### **I. Adaptive Management Work Group meetings**

The Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) meets quarterly to assist with improving the content and implementation of this plan. The role of the AMWG is to:

- Help implement adaptive management of the Blue Range Wolf Reintroduction Project;
- Evaluate and improve interagency cooperation in the field;
- Advise the Mexican Wolf Recovery Coordinator on issues related to wolf reintroduction;
- Provide a forum to:
  - a) Evaluate the status and progress of the reintroduction project;
  - b) Coordinate law enforcement activities;
  - c) Consider citizen concerns regarding the reintroductions;
  - d) Exchange other pertinent information.

#### **J. Field Contacts**

Informal field contacts made by the IFT primarily occur in the spring and fall with emphasis on hunting seasons to inform hunters of the possibility wolves in the area and to provide them with suggestions for avoiding conflict.

#### **K. Published Information**

The IFT will continue to provide updated information to be published in hunt regulation booklets every year. The purpose of the information is to make hunters aware of wolf presences in the wolf recovery area, to aid in wolf/coyote identification, and to assist hunters with avoiding negative interactions with wolves when in the field. In addition, articles will be published in newspapers and media releases will be produced when needed. Brochures will also be updated and made available.

#### **L. Media Coordination**

All media requests to accompany field personnel or to conduct on-site interviews should be referred initially to the AGFD Region I Information and Education Program Manager or a NMDGF Public Information Officer and the USFWS Mexican Wolf Recovery Program's Media Coordinator who will consult on all activities with the USFWS Mexican Wolf Recovery Coordinator or his designee and with other agency media coordinators involved. (See SOP 25.0.Electronic Media for more information.)

It will be the responsibility of the program manager or media coordinators to arrange

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media activities around the field schedules of project personnel. However, such projects should be scheduled in a way that avoids potential conflicts with wolf management actions. Media coordinators will consult with each other and project staff before committing to appointments.

Media coordinators will ensure that media information releases are coordinated with appropriate cooperators and conducted jointly, when feasible and appropriate, as outlined in the Mexican Wolf Project Public Information Release Matrix (see attached).

**M. Closure Notices**

When warranted under the non-essential experimental rule, the local Ranger District of the USFS or the WMAT will implement area closures around release pens, dens or rendezvous sites, and any special conditions (e.g. entry into closed area allowed without dogs). The closure area is posted with signs and informational flyers may be posted at trailheads to provide advanced warning to allow for detours by hikers and other recreationists. In addition, closure notices are posted at the local Ranger District office, administrative sites, in the monthly updates and on kiosks in the area of the closure.

**N. Public Education Field Experience**

Educational programs conducted within the wolf reintroduction area have been used to demonstrate the capabilities and limitations of current monitoring techniques. Participants can observe radio-tracking demonstrations as well as investigate wolf sign such as scat and abandoned kill sites remains. Habitat relationships and current land uses are also discussed during these hands-on types of activities. These activities will be focused on the public from locally affected communities.